

Filed for intro on 03/02/98

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 549
By McDonald

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Coach Robert Curtis and the Portland Imperials dribbling squad.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is proud to specially recognize civic groups that help our children develop athletic skills while also providing valuable training in life skills; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Imperials, a dribbling squad for students in the second through sixth grades, is one such exemplary group; and

WHEREAS, the Imperials started as a dream of Robert Curtis during his college years; this seemingly impossible dream has become a substantial reality; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Curtis, who played basketball in high school and attended games as a student at Western Kentucky University, created the group with the noble purposes of helping younger children to develop excellent basketball fundamentals, while also teaching them how to be good citizens; and

WHEREAS, even though he works long hours running his own greenhouse business, Coach Curtis generously contributes his expertise and time to make the Imperials a success; and

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WHEREAS, competition to make the squad is very tough; those who make the squad must show exceptional potential in the sport, including projected ball-handling skills and athleticism; of the 70 persons who tried out, only 15 earned positions on the squad; and

WHEREAS, the importance of academic accomplishment is stressed, the dribblers must maintain good grades; at least As and Bs; and

WHEREAS, the squad is a cross-section of children, boys and girls who range in height from 4 feet 2 inches to 5 feet eight inches; and

WHEREAS, Coach Curtis and his capable Assistant Coaches Danny Thompson and Randy Hatley, who is also the Portland High School boys' basketball coach, strongly encourage the young dribblers to follow the finest traditions of the Volunteer State and give back to the community; and

WHEREAS, in the summer, the Imperials take care of the grounds at city hall and a sign outside of town, they also help DARE, the Kiwanis and anyone else who needs assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Imperials also plan to host their first annual dribble-a-thon this year, an event that will raise funds for charity; and

WHEREAS, the team maintains a challenging schedule during the basketball season, traveling to two or three half-time performances a week; and

WHEREAS, their ambitious 1997-1998 schedule includes appearances at the Charlotte Hornets' home court, Middle Tennessee State University (ESPN), the University of South Carolina (CBS Television), Vanderbilt University (ESPN), the University of Tennessee, Portland High School for Imperial Night, the Ohio Valley Conference Tournament, the Southeastern Conference Tournament, the Atlanta Hawks' home court, and the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association State Basketball Tournament Finals; and

WHEREAS, the members of this talented team are Aaron Black, Corey Brewer, Garrett Coker, Colt Collier, Cody Jo Collins, Aaron Curtis, Kirk Davis, Tyler Gregory, Chelsea Groves,

Chuck Groves, Jake Johnson, Heather Lanius, Brittany Porter, Kimi Short, and Micky Thompson; and

WHEREAS, the hard-working ballgirl is Tabitha Thompson and the diligent ballboy is Wade Curtis; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to specially recognize this fine group, who, although they have never collectively won a ball game, are winners on the basketball court and on the court of life; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and commend Coach Robert Curtis and the 1997-1998 Portland Imperials and wish them well in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to each person named above, with this final clause omitted from such copies.